

# Wayne County Chancery Court begins using e-filing

May 6, 2015

The Chancery Court of Wayne County began accepting voluntary electronic filing of court records on April 15. Chancellor Franklin McKenzie Jr. has ordered that e-filing will become mandatory on May 15.

The Wayne County Chancery Court utilizes Mississippi Electronic Courts, MEC, the program developed by the Mississippi Supreme Court. MEC allows judges and attorneys to file and view documents 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Internet, and makes public access to court records more convenient.

“We are in the initial stages at this point,” said Judge McKenzie. He along with clerk staff, court staff and local attorneys have gone through training provided by MEC and have begun to use the new system.

Judge McKenzie, whose office is in Laurel, said, “I can sit at my computer and look at every court filing that comes in, and every pleading, and that’s great. No more having to wait until I go to Waynesboro to look at a court file.”

“Today I signed an order for Wayne County Chancery Court. Instead of having to mail that order back to Wayne County and incur postage, all we had to do was scan it into the system,” he said. “It should be of great benefit to attorneys to be able to access court files from home or office or by telephone.”

“The obvious benefit is we don’t have to keep up with paper any more. Things written down on a piece of paper can be lost and destroyed. Once they are scanned into this system, they are protected,” Judge McKenzie said. It also reduces storage costs for court files.

Chancery Clerk Geary Jackson said, “We are excited about it because it gives us a backup for our files. If we have some kind of disaster, we will be able to recover all of our court files. One of the best things is it’s free.”

MEC technology and training are provided free to counties. The only cost to local courts is computer hardware and Internet access.

While Wayne County Chancery Court land records were already computerized, court files were not. “Everything dealing with court was paper,” Jackson said. The court receives about 500 new case filings a year.

All new filings after May 15 will be done electronically in Wayne County Chancery Court. The Clerk’s Office also will begin scanning paper files into the system, starting with cases filed earlier this year. Older cases will be scanned into the system when there is new activity in those cases. Jackson said that he hopes to eventually scan all court files going back to 2000.

“The end result will be really good,” Jackson said.

The link to the Wayne County Chancery portal is at <https://wayne.chancery.mec.ms.gov/cgi-bin/ShowIndex.pl>. The MEC Helpdesk is at [helpdesk@mec.ms.gov](mailto:helpdesk@mec.ms.gov).

A total of 29 trial courts now use the MEC e-filing system. The MEC program, under the supervision of the Mississippi Supreme Court, is utilized in 18 counties.

Other e-filing trial courts include the Chancery Courts in DeSoto, Grenada, Holmes, Lauderdale, Leake, Lowndes, Montgomery, Oktibbeha, Tate, Webster and Yazoo counties; Chancery and Circuit Courts in Clay County; and all trial courts – Chancery, Circuit and County Courts – in Madison, Harrison, Hinds, Rankin and Warren counties. The Mississippi Supreme Court and Court of Appeals also utilize e-filing.

The MEC system is adapted from the electronic filing system used in federal district courts.

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